



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** Robert D. Goode, P.E., Assistant City Manager  
**SUBJECT:** 2016 Bond – New Sidewalk Installation, Repair and Rehabilitation funding  
**DATE:** May 17, 2017  
**CC:** Elaine Hart, Interim City Manager  
Richard Mendoza, Director, Public Works Department

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The questions listed below related to sidewalks and the 2016 Bond Program were brought up during the May 3, 2017 Mobility Committee meeting.

1. *Why is there such a significant disparity between Council Districts in the allocation of the \$37.5 million in local mobility sidewalk funding? A specific example of the Sidewalk Master Plan prioritization criteria would be helpful.*
2. *The implementation plan for the local mobility sidewalk funding is focused on addressing absent sidewalks; why hasn't any of the funding been dedicated to sidewalk repair and rehabilitation?*
3. *Should some of the Local Mobility Sidewalk funding be dedicated to repair and rehabilitation? If so, how much?*
4. *How would sidewalk repair and rehabilitation funding be allocated by Council District?*
5. *How is the city currently addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) issues related to sidewalk repair and rehabilitation?*

This memo provides summary responses and staff recommendations with additional detail provided through attachments or reference.

1. *Why is there such a significant disparity between Council Districts in the allocation of the \$37.5 million in Local Mobility Sidewalk funding? A specific example of the Sidewalk Master Plan prioritization criteria would be helpful.*

**Response:** The need is great in the City... we have identified 2,580 miles of absent sidewalks. The limited funding available (the \$37.5 million in the 2016 Bond Program will complete 40 to 60 miles...or about 2% of the missing sidewalks) should be allocated to the greatest need. We should focus on the areas with the greatest potential pedestrian demand rather than the areas that have little to no pedestrian activity now, or future projected use. With that in mind, we developed a tool (the prioritization model adopted by City Council as part of the Sidewalk Master Plan/ADA Transition Plan (SWMP)<sup>1</sup> on June 16, 2016) to provide consistent, unbiased prioritization results in an analytical, objective manner to over 300,000 sidewalk segments. There are over 20 different criteria incorporated in this model that helps us rate

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<sup>1</sup> City of Austin 2016 Sidewalk Master Plan,” <http://austintexas.gov/sidewalks>. Direct link, [http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public\\_Works/Street\\_%26\\_Bridge/Sidewalk\\_MPU\\_Adopted\\_06.16.2016\\_reduced.pdf](http://austintexas.gov/sites/default/files/files/Public_Works/Street_%26_Bridge/Sidewalk_MPU_Adopted_06.16.2016_reduced.pdf)

each missing sidewalk segment to identify the highest needs in our community. Using this tool, we can get the biggest bang for the buck...installing new sidewalks in the areas where our citizens need them and where they will be used the most.

Using the prioritization methodology, we have identified and rated every missing sidewalk segment. There are 580 miles of missing sidewalks that are classified as a “Very High” or “High” priority. By using the percentage of very high/high needs within each council district as the funding distribution model, we build upon the "consistent...." and we end up allocating funds in an "analytical, objective manner". Breaking down the results of this distribution model by council district yields the allocation that was detailed in the 2016 Mobility Bond Program Overview and Implementation Plan shared with Council on February 28<sup>th</sup>. For your convenience, this table is shown again below.

District	Very High and High Priority absent sidewalks		Estimated	
	Miles	%	spending	new sidewalk (miles)
1	149	25.7%	\$9,562,500	10 - 15
2	22	3.8%	\$1,500,000	1.5 - 2.0
3	81	14.0%	\$5,250,000	6.0 - 7.5
4	85	14.7%	\$5,437,500	6.5 - 8.0
5	15	2.6%	\$937,500	1.0 - 1.5
6	5	0.9%	\$375,000	0.3 - 0.5
7	85	14.7%	\$5,437,500	6.0 - 8.0
8	3	0.5%	\$187,500	0.1 - 0.3
9	116	20.0%	\$7,500,000	8.0 - 11
10	19	3.3%	\$1,125,000	1.2 - 1.8
	Contingency		\$187,500	
<b>totals</b>	<b>580</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$37,500,000</b>	<b>40 - 60</b>
<b>Note:</b> Estimated miles based on average cost for sidewalk retrofit projects that can be constructed using typical sidewalk program field engineering and contracting delivery model. Locations with insufficient Right of Way (ROW) and/or significant constraints (drainage, topography etc.) may result in higher costs and a corresponding reduction in completed miles.				

**Alternative Distribution Models:** The distribution model we have used is certainly not the only methodology. For example, we could choose to take funds from the council districts with the highest percentage of “Very High” and “High” priorities (1, 9, 7, 4 and 3) in order to

allocate more to the council districts with the lowest percentages of “Very High” and “High” priorities (8, 6, 5, 10, and 2). If Council chose to reallocate funds, they could establish a floor, or a minimum for each district. For example, the minimum could be set at \$1 million per district. That would increase the funding for districts 5, 6, and 8, keep districts 2 and 10 funding the same, and reduce funding for districts 1, 3, 4, 7, and 9.

**Attachment A** includes a prioritization scoring overview and an example that compares absent sidewalk scoring in areas with similar development patterns and population densities.

2. *The implementation plan for the local mobility sidewalk funding is focused on addressing absent sidewalks; why hasn't any of the funding been dedicated to sidewalk repair and rehabilitation?*

**Response:** Council had many projects and programs to evaluate when you developed the 2016 Mobility Bond. As you may recall, staff developed several alternatives ranging from \$250 million to \$720 million for your consideration. Most of these staff alternatives included a mix of Capital Renewal projects/programs and Mobility projects/programs. The “Capital Renewal” projects/programs generally focused on repairing and maintaining existing transportation infrastructure while the “Mobility” projects/programs generally focused on building and/or enhancing new infrastructure with the goal of improving mobility and providing congestion relief through capacity improvements for all transportation modes. Council ultimately chose a version of the \$720 million “Mobility” alternative instead of the “blend” of Capital Renewal and Mobility that staff proposed. During the discussion around those two specific \$720 million alternatives (the “Mobility” option vs. the “Blend” option), Council indicated that Capital Renewal projects/programs should seek funding in the next Bond Program.

Therefore, with Council’s decision to not “blend” Capital Renewal in the 2016 “Mobility” Bond, staff developed the subsequent sidewalk funding allocation based on the primary mobility component of the sidewalk needs...the absent sidewalks. This meant addressing the many gaps in the network, particularly where those gaps limit pedestrian access to transit and schools.

It was anticipated that a 2018 bond would address the ongoing Capital Renewal needs including funding for street and sidewalk rehabilitation. Ideally, the 2018 bond would provide transitional funding as the city works toward one of the key recommendations in the SWMP: “provide stable and sufficient funding for sustainable repair and rehabilitation of existing sidewalks”. We look forward to discussing these needs as the development of the 2018 Bond Program continues.

3. *Should some of the Local Mobility Sidewalk funding be dedicated to repair and rehabilitation? If so, how much?*

**Answer:** As mentioned above, we anticipate that existing sidewalk capital renewal needs would be included in a future 2018 bond funded program. Therefore, we do not recommend that funds from the 2016 Local “Mobility” Sidewalk funds be diverted to Capital Renewal funding for sidewalk repair. If Council did decide to divert funding for sidewalk repairs, you could certainly choose any amount to divert...5%, 10%, 25%, 50% of the \$37.5

million program funding. By the way, we do dedicate annual funding from the operating budget as described in the response to question #5 below to sidewalk repair and rehabilitation.

4. *How would sidewalk repair and rehabilitation funding be allocated by Council District?*

**Answer:** In general, asset management programs are implemented through a combination of condition assessments and best management practices for that particular asset type. Based on the condition assessments completed for the SWMP, over 80% of the sidewalk network has some type of impaired functionality; which means there are currently 1,900+ miles of sidewalk in need of some type of maintenance. There is a total of 565 miles of existing sidewalks that are rated “very high” or “high” by the prioritization methodology. Therefore, for 2016 Mobility Bond Program funding, or for potential 2018 Bond funding, we recommend allocating sidewalk repair and rehabilitation funding in accordance with the existing sidewalk prioritization in the SWMP (appendix D and appendix E of the SWMP...attached in this memo). This will ensure some work is being done in every district while targeting sidewalk repair investments near transit corridors and schools where residents are most reliant on the sidewalk-transit network. In other words, we will allocate funding to repair sidewalks that are in poor or failed condition AND rate very high and high in the prioritization model. The chart below shows how the funding could be distributed using the prioritization model adopted in the SWMP for existing sidewalks.

**Existing Sidewalks rated Very High/High per District**

<b>District</b>	<b>Very High and High Priority Existing sidewalks</b>	
	<b>Miles</b>	<b>%</b>
1	122	21.6%
2	22	3.9%
3	99	17.5%
4	70	12.4%
5	25	4.4%
6	1	0.2%
7	47	8.3%
8	1	0.2%
9	156	27.6%
10	22	3.9%
<b>totals</b>	<b>565</b>	<b>100%</b>

After the funding is distributed per district, sidewalks rated in Poor or Failed condition and rated Very High or High will be candidates for the district funding. The projects will be selected as described in the 2016 Mobility Bond Program Overview and Implementation Plan shared with Council on February 28<sup>th</sup>...based on coordination with other infrastructure projects within the City and with input from each Council member on the priorities in their specific district.

5. *How is the city currently addressing Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) issues related to sidewalk repair and rehabilitation?*

**Response:** The ADA requires public entities to maintain each service, program, or activity so they are readily accessible and usable by individuals with disabilities.<sup>2</sup> Public entities are also required to have an ADA Transition Plan that identifies and schedules removal of barriers that limit the accessibility of its programs and services,<sup>3</sup> which includes sidewalks.<sup>4</sup> The City of Austin's updated ADA Transition Plan for sidewalks is included as part of the SWMP.

The ADA Transition Plan identified a 10-yr schedule of improvements to address all functionally deficient sidewalk in very high and high priority areas. Achieving that goal is estimated to cost \$15M annually starting in Fiscal Year (FY) 2019, which is also consistent with a sidewalk service life of 75 years (replacing 1/75 of the current network is estimated to cost approximately \$15M annually).

In FY 2017, approximately \$750,000 in Transportation User Fee (TUF) was allocated directly to sidewalk repair and rehabilitation. There is also a significant amount of sidewalk repair and rehabilitation work that is completed indirectly through street reconstruction, Capital Improvement Projects (CIP), redevelopment, TXDOT and CapMetro partnerships, and other sources (see Attachment B). The total sidewalk repair and rehabilitation contribution from indirect sources and current TUF funding is estimated at \$5 million annually. Based on these figures, an additional \$10 million needs to be dedicated annually starting in FY 2019 to meet the requirements of the ADA Transition Plan. We look forward to future discussions with Council on these budget needs.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me or Richard Mendoza, Public Works Director. Thank you for your support of the sidewalk program.

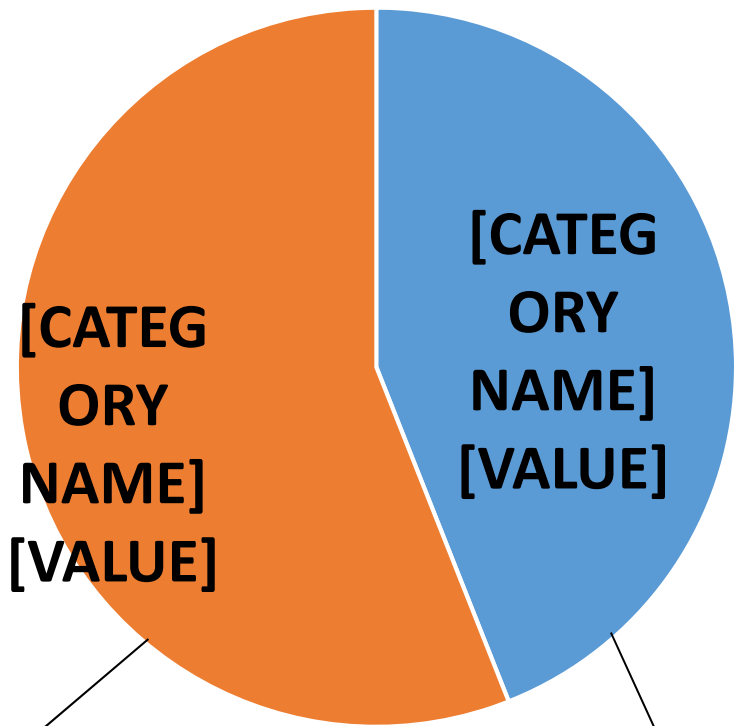
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<sup>2</sup> [28 CFR §35.150\(a\)](#)

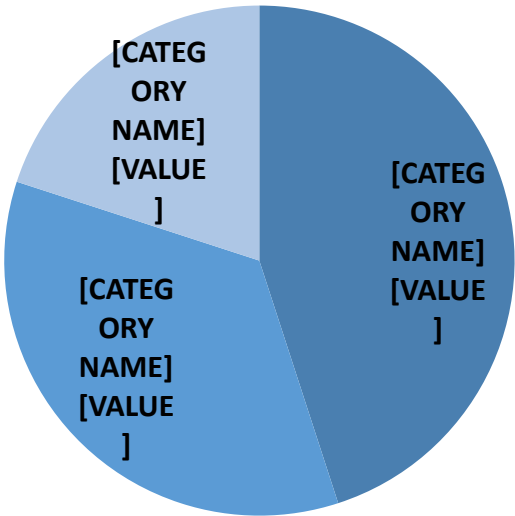
<sup>3</sup> [28 CFR §35.150\(d\)](#)

<sup>4</sup> *Barden v. City of Sacramento*, 292 F.3d 1073 (9<sup>th</sup> Cir. 2002)

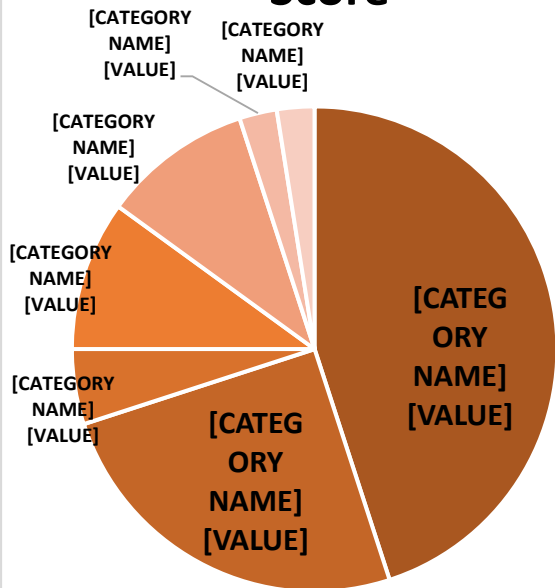
# Sidewalk Prioritization Matrix



## Pedestrian Safety Score



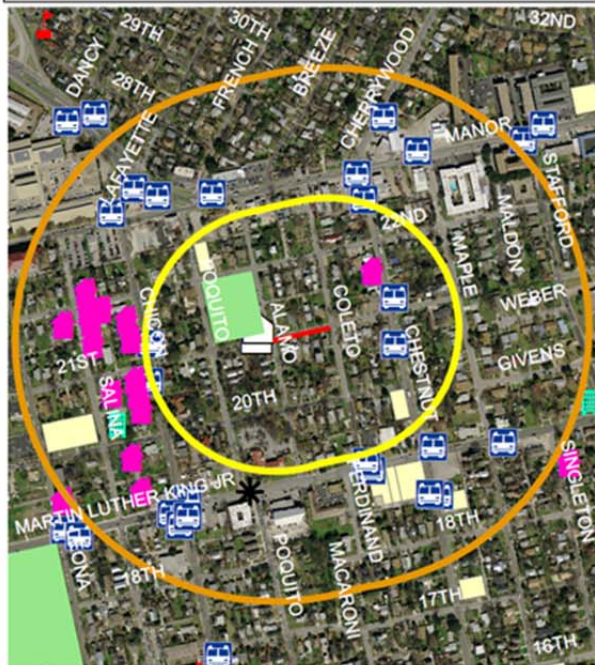
## Pedestrian Attractors Score





# Sidewalk Master Plan – Prioritization Comparison

“Very High” Priority (East 21<sup>st</sup>)



District 1 Example

“Medium” Priority (Goodrich)



District 5 Example

## Legend



## Pedestrian Attractors



## Scoring Comparison

	Street	E 21st	Goodrich
Pedestrian Attractors Score	Proximity to Attractors	25.20	7.81
	Median Household Income	2.80	0.00
	Residential Population density	10.50	10.50
	Existing Facilities on Street	5.60	5.60
	Core Transit Corridors	1.40	1.40
Safety Score	Street Classification	9.90	14.85
	Pedestrian Health and Safety Status	15.40	3.85
	<b>Total</b>	<b>70.80</b>	<b>44.01</b>

## Notes

- Just because a particular section of sidewalk is ranked as a lower priority does not mean it is not a necessary component of a complete pedestrian network. Consistent with City of Austin Complete Streets policies all private and public development, redevelopment, and capital improvement projects should include ADA compliant sidewalks (or urban trails where appropriate) along the full length of every road frontage.
- Pedestrian Safety includes health needs per zip code, based on factors such as crime statistics, obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and respiratory disease.
- Pedestrian Attractors also includes grocery stores, hospitals, on/off street parking facilities, police stations, and rail stations (not pictured here).

**Summary:** The two locations have similar population densities, proximity to schools and are both within a 1/4 mile of a core transit corridor. The location on East 21<sup>st</sup> is a “very high” priority as a result of lower median income, proximity to more affordable housing units, and a location with greater pedestrian health and safety issues.

## **Attachment B: Means to addressing ADA Transition Plan Goals for sidewalk rehabilitation**

The ADA Transition Plan identifies a near-term, 10-yr goal to address functionally deficient very high and high priority sidewalk. This goal can be addressed through various means, including:

1. Sidewalk repair and rehabilitation ancillary to Capital Improvement Projects (CIP) including 2016 Corridor, Regional Mobility, and Local Mobility Programs
2. Public Works Sidewalks and Special Projects Division (SSPD) sidewalk rehabilitation ancillary to new sidewalk projects;
3. Public Works Pavement Operations Division curb ramp upgrades along street alterations (partially funded);
4. Other City Departments addressing their responsibilities (*e.g.*, AWU street rehab projects require curb ramp upgrades, CIP road construction);
5. Other entities addressing their responsibilities (*e.g.*, CapMetro addressing bus stops and pedestrian routes to transit, Austin Energy addressing utility obstructions);
6. Development (accessible sidewalks are required with new commercial development; functional sidewalks will be required with all development);
7. Other Sources (*e.g.*, Parking Benefit Districts, Grants); and
8. Property Owner driveway rehabilitation through future commercial driveway assessments.
9. Future efficiencies due to competitive, routine work based on dedicated sidewalk rehabilitation and stable funding.



## APPENDIX D (Sidewalk Master Plan): EXISTING SIDEWALK INVENTORY, BY COUNCIL DISTRICT AND PRIORITY

Miles of Existing Sidewalk and Driveway, by Council District and Priority							
	Very High	High	Medium	Low	Very Low	District Subtotal	District Percent
District 1	80	42	39	58	33	252	11%
District 2	6	16	48	97	95	262	11%
District 3	58	41	38	28	12	177	7%
District 4	37	33	38	36	14	159	7%
District 5	2	23	35	66	151	277	12%
District 6	0	1	12	51	235	298	12%
District 7	16	31	54	93	66	261	11%
District 8	-	1	13	74	227	315	13%
District 9	114	42	22	16	3	197	8%
District 10	8	14	29	57	92	200	8%
<b>Priority Subtotal</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>330</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>927</b>	<b>2,398</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Priority Percent</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>39%</b>	<b>100%</b>	

## APPENDIX E (Sidewalk Master Plan): EXISTING SIDEWALK CONDITION ASSESSMENT RESULTS, BY COUNCIL DISTRICT

Percentage of existing sidewalk, by Council District and Condition						
	A-Excellent	B-Good	C-Fair	D-Poor	F-Failed	District Percent
District 1	17%	10%	27%	42%	4%	11%
District 2	8%	8%	29%	51%	4%	11%
District 3	12%	16%	23%	46%	3%	7%
District 4	10%	11%	29%	38%	12%	7%
District 5	9%	12%	20%	51%	8%	12%
District 6	7%	5%	19%	65%	5%	12%
District 7	7%	9%	27%	50%	7%	11%
District 8	12%	9%	17%	55%	7%	13%
District 9	16%	6%	24%	49%	6%	8%
District 10	7%	12%	23%	38%	20%	8%
<b>Condition Percent</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>9%</b>	<b>23%</b>	<b>50%</b>	<b>7%</b>	